Roosevelt Base, Fire Station
(Building No. 3)
Corner of Idaho Street and Reeves Avenue
~~Naval Station Long Beach~~
Long Beach
Los Angeles
California

HABS No. CA-2663-E

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ROOSEVELT BASE, FIRE STATION (Building No. 3)

HABS No. CA-2663 -E

Location: Corner of Idaho Street and Reeves Avenue, Naval Station Long Beach, Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California

USGS Long Beach Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 11.385350.3735400

Significance: The Roosevelt Base Historic District, constructed in 1940-1943, consists of 11 buildings designed in the International Style with Mediterranean Revival detailing, five structures, and extensive historic landscaping. It is eligible for the National Register for its site planning, landscaping, and architectural style, and for its Associate Architect Paul Williams, a nationally prominent Los Angeles Afro-American architect. Additionally, the District is significant for its association with the buildup of permanent Naval facilities on the Pacific Coast under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, during the mobilization period preceding the United States' entry into World War II.

Building 3, a fire station with low-pitched hipped roof with red shingle tiles, wide overhanging eaves, ribbon windows, and concrete tower is a good example of the International and Mediterranean Revival styles. The building has maintained its architectural integrity and original purpose as a Fire Station.

Description: Exterior: This L-shape two-story building, measuring 60'6" x 100', has a concrete pile foundation and reinforced concrete walls, 9" thick, with a 4' x 8' plywood form-board exposed finish. One-story ells extend from the northeast and southwest corners. The first floor has a flat roof deck covered with composition roofing and gravel, overhanging eaves 4 feet wide, and fixed metal gutters. The eaves form a projecting concrete frame around the truck entrance driveway bays at the main entrance on the east side. The second floor has a hip roof with red-shingle tiles over reinforced concrete slabs, wide overhanging eaves, and fixed metal gutters. The hose tower has a flat concrete slab roof with shallow eaves over the metal-louvered window wall wrapping around the west and south sides. On the south side a pipe vent, of aluminum and tin, pierces the second floor roof line.

The Fire Station's main entrance on the east has four metal-framed garage bays for the firetrucks, two of which have the original overhead roll-up metal panel doors, painted white, and two of which have replacement vinyl curtain panel doors. The ell, at the northeast corner, has a single metal door, painted white, with a wire glass pane in its upper half. The rear of the Fire Station on the west side has three doors:

two garage driveway bays with vinyl curtain doors and a single solid-metal door. The north side has a hollow metal door, painted white, with a louvered metal pane at its bottom section. The south side has a solid metal door, painted white.

Building 3 has 15 rectangular windows in metal frames with fixed center panes flanked by a pair of casement windows: the east side has one on the northeast ell of the first floor with a concrete planter box underneath, and four on the second floor; the north side has two on the first floor, with a concrete planter box underneath, and four on the second floor along with a fixed five-paned vertical window of obscure glass lighting the stairwell; the west side has two each on the first and second floor. The new ell at the southwest has a modern glass sliding window in aluminum sash, with a fixed center pane flanked by a pair of sliding panes.

Interior. Building 3 has a total gross floor area of 5,255 square feet. The first floor is divided into 18 rooms: apparatus room, four truck bays, hose tower, a dispatcher's office, lobby, kitchen, laundry/drying room, passage/hallway, an office, two closets, transformer room, two bathrooms, tool room, Captain's Office, two supply closets for air tanks, and facilities for breathing apparatus.

Linoleum tile floors with black rubber baseboards are found in the bathrooms, laundry/drying room, kitchen, lobby, passage/hallway, Captain's Office, and the dispatcher's office; the rest of the rooms have smooth concrete floors. The apparatus room and the hose tower have exposed concrete walls. All other rooms have smooth concrete plaster walls. The stairs, tool room, and the dispatcher's office have smooth concrete plaster ceilings; all other rooms have exposed concrete ceilings.

The Second Floor of the Fire Station consists of eight rooms: the Captain's Bunk room, a 12-bed dormitory with two firemen' poles, a lavatory, locker room, shower, drying room, bathroom, and stairway hall. Flooring is wall-to-wall carpeting in the dormitory, smooth concrete in the stair hall and stairway steps, and linoleum tiles with black rubberized baseboards in the Captain's Bunk and all other rooms.

The walls are smooth concrete plaster in the dormitory and stair hall. Original yellow-glazed tiles remain in the bathroom and showers. The dormitory has textured-plaster ceiling with fluorescent lights, and all other rooms have smooth concrete plaster ceilings.

Alterations: In 1991 a new ell on the southwest corner was added for two aerial ladder firetrucks that were too long for the original driveway bays. The two driveway doorways at the southwest were raised to fit the aerial ladder trucks, and the original doors were replaced with vinyl curtain doors of clear, white, and blue panels.

The interior was altered in 1991 and 1992 when the Fire Station, in addition to providing fire safety and protection for the Naval Station, took over the responsibility for dealing with hazardous materials accidents. The Station originally accommodated an eight-man operation team, now it is a 16-man operation which includes a hazardous materials response team.

On the first floor a new wall with two single doors were added to separate the garage from the passage way and the lobby room. The dispatcher's office has a new wall, that created a walled hallway separating the dispatcher's office from the lobby and the transformer room. At the north end of this new wall is a single door that opens to the dispatcher's office. The dispatcher's original wall was also extended with a new single door.

A laundry area was put in the drying room. The kitchen, originally located on the second floor, now occupies the original day room on the first floor. Some of the original kitchen cupboards were moved to the laundry area. The Work Room has been altered to become the Captain's Office. The shelves in the supply closets have been re-arranged for storage of air facilities and breathing apparatus.

On the second floor, the former kitchen was changed to the Captain's Bunk room. In the dormitory three original closets to the north of the slide pole and the boot cabinets inside the dormitory were removed. The original linoleum floor was covered with to wall-to-wall carpet. There are now 12 beds in the dormitory, instead of eight. The original hard plaster ceiling in the dormitory has been changed to a textured plaster ceiling, and fluorescent lights have been added.

Surroundings: The Fire Station is surrounded by Reeves Avenue to the north, Idaho Street to the east, building 13 to the south, and the Heating Plant 4 and building 15 to the west.

Historical Context: Built in 1942 at the cost of $70,957.78, the construction of the Fire Station was part of a plan to provide recreational and administrative facilities for the Pacific Fleet anchored in San Pedro harbor. The construction of this complex was part of a nationwide military effort to replace deteriorating World War I temporary buildings with new permanent facilities to attract and retain post-war peacetime forces. Rather than using a standard design from the Bureau of Yards and Docks, the Navy, through Allied Engineers, hired local civilian architects Adrian Wilson and Paul R. Williams. As a result the buildings, designed in the International Style with Mediterranean Revival details, are unique to the Base.

Construction of this complex, named Roosevelt Base, took place between 1940 and 1943, and cost $18 million, funded by Congressional

appropriations. Included were the gymnasium (23), squash/handball courts and locker rooms (22), a swimming pool (233) and tennis courts (221), arcade (234), lounge and bowling alley (20), officers' club (24), and fleet landing building (10), administration building (1), dispensary (2), fire station (3), central heating plant (4), labor board building (41), gatehouse (40), and main gates (gate 1), and a net pier (pier 7, structure 126), and extensive landscaping.

Although designed in 1940 as recreation facilities for personnel of the Pacific Fleet, the complex was not used initially for this purpose. In response to Japan's increasing belligerence toward China, President Roosevelt, (for whom the Base was named) ordered the fleet from San Pedro Bay to Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii to serve as a deterrence and warning. After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Base was rushed to completion; new temporary barracks were constructed, and the facilities were used during World War II as support for a Small Craft Training Center and as the administrative center of the Naval Operating Base in Long Beach.

Building 3 has served as a fire station from its inception to the present.

After World War II the facilities, renamed Naval Station Long Beach, were used to support the U.S. Navy ships' personnel either homeported in Long Beach or in drydock for repairs at the adjacent Naval Shipyard. In 1991 the Naval Station was listed for closure as part of the national Base Re-Use and Closure activities as the Department of Defense down-sized at the end of the Cold War. In 1994 the Base officially closed, although a number of buildings are still in use.

Sources:

Original architectural drawings #17082, #17083, #17084, #17086, #17087, 18139, #17079, are located at Building 300, Long Beach Naval Shipyard archives. They are dated April 9 and November 25, 1941.

Archiplan Urban Design Collaborative. 1987. *Terminal Island Long Beach Naval Complex, Long Beach, California: Update of Engineering Evaluation for Naval Station: Long Beach, California.* Revised April 1988, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Long Beach Naval Station. Contract N624-86-C-5263.

Manley, William, Carson Anderson, and Susan M. Hector. 1994. *Historical and Architectural Assessment - Naval Station Long Beach, Long Beach, California.* San Diego, California. Contract Number N68711-92-M-4893.

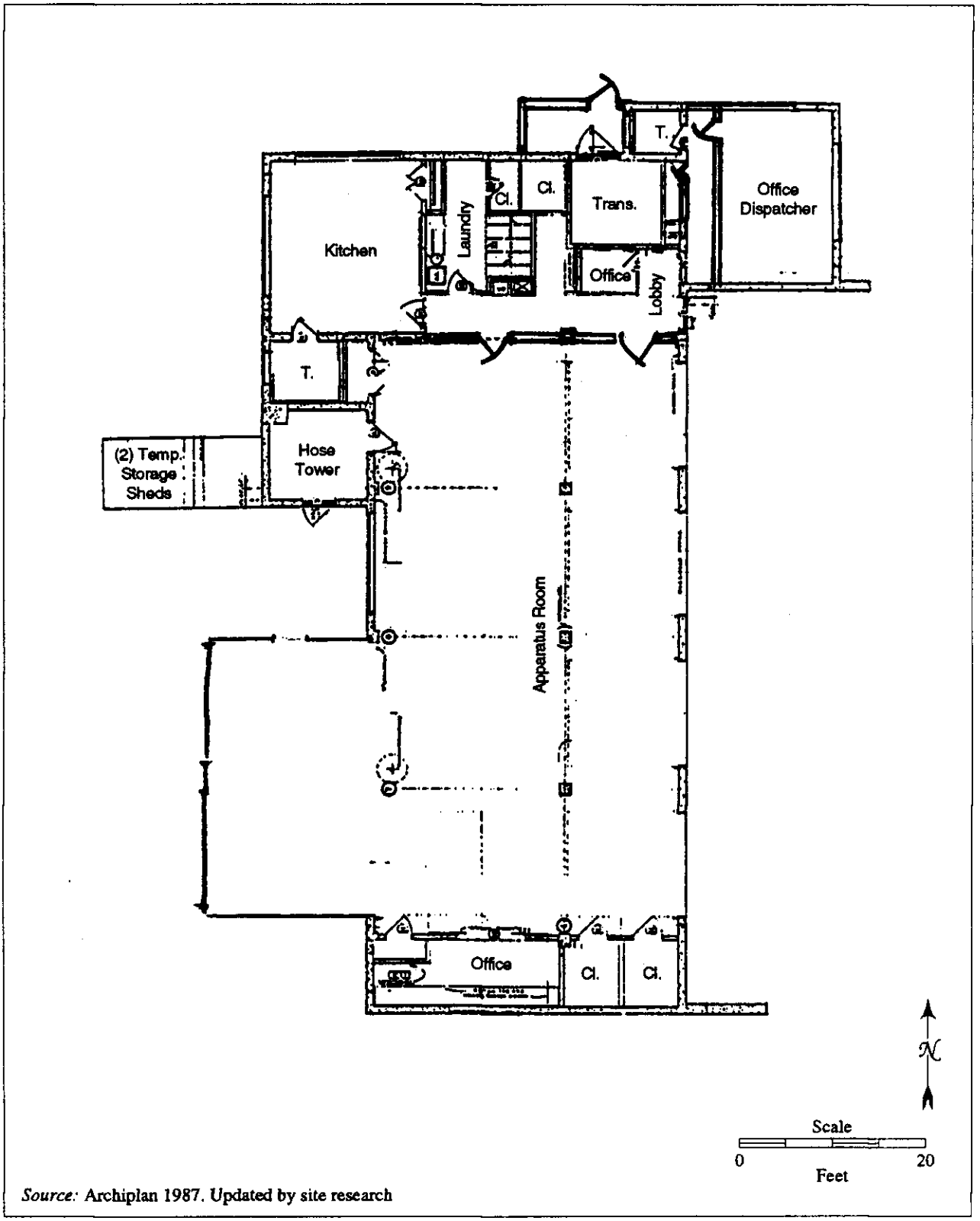
Property Record Card: NAV. S. and A. Form 277

"Roosevelt Naval Base, Terminal Island: Headquarters of The Naval Operating Base, Terminal Island, Long Beach Harbor." 1944. *Architectural Record* May: 58-70.

Todd Erickson. Interview with Alexandra C. Cole, 29 March 1996, Naval Station Long Beach, Long Beach, California.

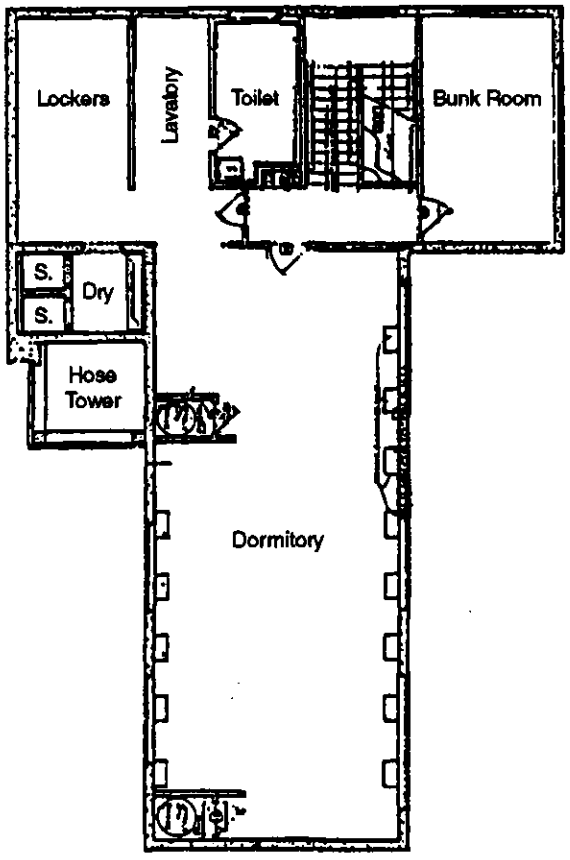
Project Information: This HABS documentation project was undertaken as a mitigative recording required by the Memorandum of Agreement, dated _____, 1996, signed by the City of Long Beach, the California State Preservation Officer and the Navy. The Navy proposes to transfer the Naval Station property to the City of Long Beach. The City, through the Port of Long Beach, plans to demolish all the buildings and structures on Roosevelt Base for a container terminal.

The documentation was prepared by Alexandra C. Cole, SAIC, Santa Barbara, architectural historian and Fermina B. Murray, historian, in May 1996. Large-format photography was done by William B. Dewey of Santa Barbara, California, in April 1996.



Source: Archiplan 1987. Updated by site research

LAYOUT OF BUILDING 3, FIRST FLOOR. 1996



Scale
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Feet

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Source: Archiplan 1987. Updated by site research

LAYOUT OF BUILDING 3, SECOND FLOOR. 1996